

The Good Housewife's Coat of ARMS;

Or, The Spinning-Wheel's Glory.



PART I.

ONE morning as I was trudging about,
I heard a terrible noise, and a terrible rout.
It seems my Dame's Spinning-Wheel in Kitchen was come,
And madam Tea-Table must needs have her room.
At first she spake up with a terrible grace,
Indeed madam Tow-Cart I'd have you give place.
My company is more desired than your's,
Therefore now pack off, and get out of doors.

But the Spinning-Wheel was not in the least afraid;
But said, I'm your elder, I'll not be dismay'd:
I was lov'd and embrac'd before that you came,
But now indeed Tea-table is all the game.
Tea-table at that flew into a rage,
And for her attendance she call'd her foot-page,
Saying, bring me my servants, I do you desire,
We'll cripple this Tow-cart, and throw it in the fire.

Then to her assistance there came in her view
The Tea-kettle, Tea-pot, and Canister too:
The Sugar-dish, Slop-bason, Cream-pot and Tongs,
Spoons, Cups, and Saucers came all in a throng.

But Tea-pot she first did the Tow-cart oppose,
Who strove with her till she did sweat at the nose;
Which put all the rest in a terrible fright,
They all swore they'd murder the Spinning-Wheel quite.

The Slop-bason, Cream-pot, Saucers, and all,
About the poor Spinning-Wheel's ears they did fall;
Who up with her distaff and fought with such power,
As she laid them all sprawling on the floor.
Te a-kettle jump'd at her, being hard and stout,
Saying, Turn to me; let us two have a bout;
With that they did fight two hours or more:
But Distaff made Tea-kettle bitterly roar.

Tea-kettle stuck to her, and claw'd her about;
At last the poor Wheel was forc'd to give out.
For she beat out her teeth, and wounded her fore;
As the Spinning-Wheel she could strike no more.
But Love-work and Labour did chance to come by;
And hearing the Spinning-Wheel thus for to cry,
Both enter'd the room with Courage and Spite,
And swore they would cripple the Tea-kettle quite.

They call'd her vile strumpet, and brazen-face Jade,
Because she had ruin'd one half of the trade.
They kick'd her, and beat her, and haw'd her about,
'Till Shop-keepers and Smugglers appear'd in the rout.
They finding themselves to be set in a fray,
They took up the Wheel, and with speed run away;
And laid it up safe in a garret so high,
Where for a time the poor Wheel must lie.

PART II.

THE Spinning-Wheel finding herself thus abus'd,
She enter'd her suit, and her witnesses chus'd;
Who stood up all firm in the Spinning-Wheel's place,
And before my Lord Judge she open'd the case,
There was Love-work, Industry, Housewifry, and Thrift,
With Prudence and Verity, Truth, Work-hard, and Swift:
Stay-at-home, No-Tatler, Clean-Smock, and No-Rags,
And the opposite party were nothing but brags.

There were Gossips and Tatlers, Never-work, Prick-clout,
With Danner and Panner, and Toss-cap-about;
Sugar-lips, and Butter-chops, Milk-crock, and Pride,
With Idle, and Lazy, and Sluttish beside.
All these on both sides in the court did appear,
Before my Lord-Judge, who was very severe.

He had them all sworn then for to speak true,
Saying, Friends be mindful, observe whrt you do.
The Wheel being Plaintiff, her witnesses did call;
Then Truth she spoke up, and so did them all,
That since the Tea-table had been in such fashion,
Her fav' rites have ruin'd great part of the nation.
For tradesmen and farmers they never can thrive
So long as they've got your Tea-table wives;
For indeed, sir, said Truth, for this damnable Tea,
We send all our money away beyond sea.

Then Prudence stood up, and seconded Truth,
Saying, Please your Worship, when I was a youth,
We had no such rattle-trap whims, I am sure,
Yet good entertainment for rich and for poor:
For a slice of good cheese, and a pot of good beer,
With a toast round the loaf, was excellent cheer.
We'd snap up our breakfast, then sit down and spin:
But now we must sit till the clock strikes Ten.

Then up and get dinner, being ready by one,
The clock it strikes two before we have done:
Then at three they sit down to the Tea-table again.
So pray sir, how can they have any time to spin?
With sipping and chatting, the day doth soon pass,
In comes my Lord Brandy in a jacket of glass;
And makes them all merry, they tattle and sing,
And thus at the last they forget to spin.

The Judge he smil'd to hear what they did say,
And call'd for the Tea-table witnesses away;
Who all did appear; but the Gossips were first,
Who with pight and malice were ready to burst.
Which Tattle perceiving, she straitway did speak,
But sigh'd as if her very heart would break.
Quoth she, Sir, this Wheel is so impudent grown,
We cannot be easy with friends, nor alone.

And therefore I beg of your Lordship, said she,
That you would transport them all over the sea:
If we chance but to drink a glass with a friend,
Our husbands come swearing, Why don't you spin?
And having thus said, she was straitway dismiss'd,
Then Meacock stood up, and gap'd till she piss'd.
Now she and the rest did all heartily pray
The Judge, that he could send the Wheels away.

Which had surely been done, had it not been for Truth,
She bringing the linnen she'd spun in her youth,
And shew'd it the Judge, who at it did stare,
Concluding the Tea-folks could shew no such ware.
Then those at the Wheel had their freedom again,
And wrought in the kitchen for ever to reign.
And the Tea-table she in the parlour must roam,
If once she comes out, then death is her doom.

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